

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN NIACT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY JIDDA NIACT IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 190465

EXDIS//FOR AMBASSADORS PICKERING AND PORTER FROM ATHERTON

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: PFOR, JO, SA, US

SUBJECT: LEAKS RE JORDAN'S HAWK PROGRAM

1. AUGUST 1 WASHINGTON POST AND NEW YORK TIMES CARRIED DETAILED STORIES WRITTEN BY OBERDORFER AND GWERTZMAN, RESPECTIVELY, THAT SAUDIS HAD AGREED TO PAY DOLS. 540 MILLION TO FINANCE THE HAWK-VULCAN PROGRAM FOR JORDAN, CLAIMING THAT ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS WERE THE SOURCES. MAIN THRUST OF BOTH STORIES WAS THAT THE SAUDI AGREEMENT WAS EXPECTED TO FORECLOSE A POSSIBLE DEAL BETWEEN JORDAN AND THE USSR. BOTH STORIES DESCRIBE IN CONSIDERABLE DETAIL THE HISTORY OF AND THE VARIOUS FIGURES INVOLVED IN THE ORIGINAL PACKAGE, INCLUDING THE CONTINGENCY FUND, AND OBERDORFER DESCRIBES THOSE ELEMENTS WHICH HAD TO BE ELIMINATED IN THE PRESENT PACKAGE. BOTH INDICATE THAT RIFAI'S RESIGNATION CONTRIBUTED TO A POSITIVE SAUDI DECISION.

2. THESE TWO STORIES APPARENTLY DRAW HEAVILY ON JULY 29 STORY IN BOSTON GLOBE BY BILL BEECHER.

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3. FOR AMBASSADOR PICKERING: PLEASE INFORM HUSSEIN THAT WE VERY MUCH REGRET THESE LEAKS, WHICH WERE NOT AUTHORIZED. AS HE MAY KNOW, THE MOST THAT WE HAVE AUTHORIZED ANYONE TO SAY IS THAT WE REMAIN PREPARED TO PROVIDE JORDAN WITH AN

AIR DEFENSE SYSTEM, THAT PROSPECTS LOOK PROMISING, BUT THAT DETAILS OF FUNDING SATISFACTORY TO ALL CONCERNED ARE STILL BEING WORKED OUT. SAY TO THE KING THAT WE APPRECIATE THE PROBLEM THE PUBLICATION OF THESE STORIES PRESENTS TO HIM. IF IN LIGHT OF THESE LEAKS HE FEELS HE CAN NO LONGER HOLD OFF ISSUING A COMMUNIQUE ABOUT THE AIR DEFENSE PACKAGE TO HIS ARMED FORCES, WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE IT WOULD BE WISE TO CHECK OUT FIRST WITH THE SAUDIS WHAT HE INTENDS TO DO, TO AVOID INTRODUCING ANY NEW ELEMENTS OF MISUNDERSTANDING.

4. FOR AMBASSADOR PORTER: YOU MAY WISH TO DRAW ON FOREGOING IN ANY EXPLANATIONS YOU BELIEVE IT IS NECESSARY TO MAKE TO THE SAUDIS. KISSINGER

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